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## **The Training of a Modern Language Teacher with Special Reference to German.**

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Introductory Chapter to "A Guide for the Scientific Study of the German Language and Literature."

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The study of a modern language ought to be practical and scientific.

In the high-school and college the student has to acquire first the indispensable practical basis of the living language, and get acquainted with the most important historical facts and cultural conditions of the people whose language he studies.

The student is confused if he attempts the scientific study of a language without the solid basis of its modern form.

At the university the foundations of the philological study should be laid. Here the student learns to view the development of the language and literature in the light of history; he learns not only the facts, but their inner connection; he becomes acquainted here with the older phases of the language, with the critical interpretation of old and modern texts, and finally with the study of scientific grammar, the history of the language and comparative philology. In short, here he gets a general and methodical survey of the whole domain of his subject, which, added to his practical knowledge of the language, places him far above the "maître de langues" or "Einpauker," and gives him that feeling of confidence which is a guarantee for the success in his teaching.

But however successfully a student or young teacher may have worked in his own country, a stay of at least half a year in the foreign country whose language he wishes to teach, is indispensable. This visit should be made immediately after taking his degree. His general knowledge of the language, literature, and history, his training in phonetics, and the better understanding the student acquires of the character and the culture of the foreign people assure him then a richer and more varied benefit.

The main object of traveling in a foreign country is the perfection of the practical knowledge and understanding of the language. It is necessary to warn the student not to spend his time in learning things which he can learn as well at home from books. His acquaintance with the manners and customs of the people, its institutions, administration, education, etc., is a matter of secondary importance and ought only to help the main object.

Although there are noticeable differences between the speech, life, and character of Northern and Southern Germany, the importance of the place selected is not to be overrated. It is true that the capital of a country

should be known to the special student of a language in the first place, but after it is well known to him he may reside for some time in a Middle or South German University town (Jena, Marburg, Heidelberg or Freiburg).

Once settled in the foreign country he should speak and hear as much German as possible, keeping away from everything English. He should stay with a refined German family—the family of a German secondary teacher will be the best for him to go—or select a good private boarding place where he will hear good German, where he is compelled to talk and at the same time has a chance to get acquainted with the customs and the peculiarities of the German family and social life.

To hear as much German as possible he should attend lectures about history, geography, literature, economics, art, etc. He should hear sermons and political debates, and he should go to the theatres where he is sure to hear a good pronunciation. The reading of the play beforehand is strongly recommended. He should witness a great public festival, a “Sängerfest,” “Turnfest,” or military display. He should buy and read different newspapers and magazines; see the great works of art; compare the North and South German comic papers, and compare them with the American, English, and French. A very important point is the keeping of a diary, in which he may enter everything that strikes him as characteristic of foreign life, and in which he may describe his impressions. This will afford an excellent opportunity for him to express his thoughts in the foreign idiom. But he should beware of too rash generalizations, such as the Englishman made, who, visiting France for the first time and being waited upon by a stuttering red-haired waiter, wrote in his diary: “All Frenchmen are red-headed and stutter.” He should collect illustrated catalogues; buy photographs and picture post-cards, procure some collections of popular songs with music, and books illustrating both life and customs. He should try to be admitted to good schools and attend lessons in the different classes where he gets acquainted with expressions which he may use afterwards in his own teaching. Through the corrections of the teacher he learns to distinguish the good language from the vulgar, the more choice expressions from the popular expressions. Only then may he hope to become well acquainted with Germany and Germans.

But this practical and scientific training is not yet sufficient.

The success of the teacher depends on three things: his thorough knowledge of the subject he teaches, his personality which inspires his teaching with the vital force necessary to raise it to an educative influence, and his acquaintance with the science of education.

Many teachers think that the learning acquired at the University qualifies them without further preparation for teaching. It is an erroneous idea that scholarship and experience will enable a teacher to fill his place

properly. Experience is doubtless very important especially when combined with pedagogical tact, but even so it is not possible to dispense with all didactic theory. Of course, pedagogy is an art for which we must have a natural disposition, but it is an art based on science. A teacher will only then be a true pedagogue when he knows how to adapt his presentation of the scientific material to the peculiar psychical condition of the pupils. Therefore he must be acquainted with the fundamental laws of psychology and their application to practical pedagogy; he must have the knowledge of the history of pedagogy and especially the pedagogy of the high-schools.

Unfortunately most students see in this demand not a beneficial but rather a burdensome and possibly a superfluous requirement, one which is obeyed only in so far as it is indispensable.

This want of pedagogical preparation causes many teachers to see in their profession a miserable day's labor, made up of drilling on rules, review of paradigms and last, but not least, the correction of written tests and papers.

Nowhere is a philosophical training more necessary than in teaching, where daily routine tends to dull the mind and narrows so powerfully the mental horizon. Only when the teacher possesses this philosophical training will it be possible to realize the demand which Herbart expresses in the following words: "It is to be expected that the teacher will find through his study of philosophy new auxiliary means which will help him in the teaching of his main subject."

One who has selected his profession without an inner vocation naturally cannot be helped. Inclination and love for his profession is as indispensable for the teacher as it is for the physician or minister. But this does not mean that one is a born teacher and has no need of thorough preparation. "Auch der Schulmeister fällt nicht vom Himmel."

"The student who has obtained through his study of the history of pedagogy more than mere names, dates and watchwords, who has taken a glance at the inner connection of this science with ethics and psychology and is acquainted with the deepest questions and highest problems of existence will begin his profession with modesty and pride." (W. Vietor.)

"Such a training as proposed for intending teachers of modern languages, is just as long, their work at least as hard, as sound, as important and dignified, as that of their colleagues. They have to master one, or even two, difficult languages, to be acquainted with the masterpieces of a rich literature extending over many centuries; they have not only to write, but to speak these languages easily with genuine foreign intonation. This requires them to go through a special scientific and practical training of the ear and of the speech organs, and involves an expensive stay abroad" (Max Breul, *The Teaching of Modern Languages.*)

I cannot conclude this chapter without quoting some of the precepts given to students of modern languages in a lecture held by Prof. Münch at the *Allgemeiner deutscher Neuphilologentag* in Hannover. (8—11 Juni 1908.)

Zehn Gebote für junge Neuphilologen, mit Erläuterungen.

1. Eine Sprache, die du demnächst lehren willst, musst du wirklich verstehen und wirklich können. Glaube nicht, dass das leicht sei, auch nicht bei einer für leicht geltenden Sprache. Nur mit eindringlichem, ausdauerndem and vielseitigem Bemühen kannst du dies Ziel in befriedigender Weise erreichen.

2. Denke nicht, dass du dem von der Schule mitgebrachten Wissen und Können der Sprache im wesentlichen nur ein historisch-wissenschaftliches Studium hinzuzufügen habest. Deine Kenntnis der Grammatik muss sich (insbesondere auch für die konkreten Gebiete) ausserordentlich und beständig erweitern, deine Beherrschung der physischen Seite der Sprache muss nicht nur volle Korrektheit der Aussprache einschliessen, sondern auch auf bestimmtes phonetisches Wissen begründet sein; deine Lektüre muss, verschiedenen Perioden zugewandt, im ganzen einen ansehnlichen Umfang erreichen, und du musst dich befähigen, nicht bloss stilgerecht zu schreiben, sondern auch über Geschriebenes richtig zu urteilen.

3. Glaube nicht, dass das Können einer Sprache aus dem Wissen ihrer Normen sich natürlich ergebe. Parallel mit der Linie der Erkenntnis muss beständig die der Übung laufen, ebenso parallel mit allem theoretischen Erfassen oder Begründen die bildenden Beziehungen. Wisse, dass der Lehrer einer lebenden Sprache in besonderem Sinne und Maass ein durchgebildeter Mensch sein muss, der namentlich Gewandtheit, Lebendigkeit und Verständnis fremden Lebens nicht vermissen lässt.

4. Sieh in dem praktischen Können nichts Verächtliches, weil es auch bei nicht wissenschaftlich Gebildeten anzutreffen ist. Für dich muss es eine Seite der Vertrautheit mit der Sprache bilden, die eben nicht eine bloss theoretische sein kann.

5. Entschliesse dich beizeiten mit Bestimmtheit für deine Studienfächer und ziehe den Kreis nicht allzu weit, damit du zur rechten Zeit die rechte Einheit und Geschlossenheit erreichst. Langes Herumtasten musst du vermeiden, da es gilt, in mässiger Zeit viel und vielerlei zu erarbeiten. Bei den der Sprache deiner Wahl verwandten und benachbarten Sprachen wirst du unter gewöhnlichen Verhältnissen dich auf eine vorläufige Einführung in ihre Eigentümlichkeit zu beschränken haben, woran sich eine eindringendere Beschäftigung in späterer Zeit unschwer anschliessen kann.

6. Suche das rechte Gleichgewicht, wie zwischen wissenschaftlichem Erkennen und persönlichem, vielseitigem Üben, so überhaupt zwischen rezeptivem und selbsttätigem Studium, ebenso aber auch zwischen der ge-

schichtlichen Entwicklung der Sprache und ihrem gegenwärtigen Bestand. Glaube nicht, über alle Gebiete Vorlesungen hören zu müssen, und noch weniger, mit dem Hören der Vorlesungen schon das Wesentliche gewonnen zu haben. Vertiefe dich in die früheren Sprachstufen nicht, bevor du auf der gegenwärtigen hinlänglich sicher geworden bist. Widme der Erkenntnis des Vergangenen keinen so grossen Bruchteil deiner Gesamtzeit, dass du darüber die lebendige Anschauung und Beherrschung der lebenden Sprache versäumst. Fühle dich nicht vorzeitig als „Romanist“ oder „Anglist“, während du noch ein Stümper bist im Französischen oder Englischen.

7. Geh nicht verfrüht von dem allgemeinen Studium zum speziellen über, obwohl du natürlich deine Vorliebe einer bestimmten Lektüre oder sonst bestimmten Einzelgebieten zuwenden darfst. Namentlich aber widme dich nicht bestimmten wissenschaftlichen Einzelthemen, etwa behufs Doktordissertationen, bevor du eine befriedigende allgemeine Höhe und Sicherheit erreicht hast, also der Regel nach erst in den beiden letzten Semestern des Universitätsbesuches, der mit Einschluss dieser besonderen Arbeit zehn Semester nicht überschreiten soll. Bemühe dich für die Dissertation um ein Thema, das nicht wesentlich nur geduldige Arbeit in einseitig enger Bahn erfordert und daher für die Erhöhung deiner Geistesbildung keinen eigentlichen Ertrag gibt.

8. Meine nicht, dass es einen Wert habe, eine möglichst grosse Anzahl von Schriftwerken irgendwie durchgelesen zu haben, aber beschäftige dich mit einer Auswahl gründlich. Im übrigen lass eine gute Chrestomathie dir immer zur Hand sein, ebenso wie ein nicht zu knappes Lexikon; letzteres auch, um jede Unsicherheit und etwaige Unregelmässigkeit der Wortbetonung und der Aussprache der einzelnen Wörter allmählich zu überwinden. Übe dich übrigens immer auch in lautem und lebendigem Lesen französischer oder deutscher Texte; mache dich mit auserlesener Dichtung völlig vertraut; strebe über äusserlichem Übersetzen zu lebendiger innerer Anschauung des fremden Tatgehaltes.

9. Nimm alle Gelegenheiten wahr, mit Ausländern zu verkehren, Ausländer zu hören, fremdnationales Leben kennen zu lernen; aber glaube nicht, dass jeder Ausländer deine Aussprache und Sprachfertigkeit wirklich zu beurteilen bereit und geneigt sei; höre darüber nicht auf, deinem Können zu misstrauen. Geh ins Ausland, wenn du in der Lage bist, und sieh dich recht vielseitig im dortigen Leben um; aber glaube nicht, dass die rechte Aussprache, Betonung, Ausdrucksweise dir dort angefliegen kommen, dass du stets Selbstkontrolle unterlassen darfst.

10. Verschieb nicht alles positiv Einzuprägende, so wenig wie das durch Übung zu Erwerbende, auf die letzte Zeit vor der Prüfung; vertraue übrigens, dass auch in der Prüfung Verständnis, lebendiges Können und Urteilsfähigkeit über blosses Gedächtniswissen geschätzt wird.